



## USAID's Bengal Tiger Conservation Activity (Bagh) Bagh Year Two Second Quarter Summary of Progress



Smithsonian  
Institution



## **USAID's Bengal Tiger Conservation Activity (Bagh)**

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## **Bagh Year Two Second Quarter Summary of Progress**

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## Acronyms

ACME	Accelerating Commitment for Monitoring and Evaluation
AWP	Annual Work Plan
Bagh	USAID's Bengal Tiger Conservation Activity (USAID's Bagh Activity)
BBG	Bangladesh Border Guard
BCAS	Bangladesh Centre for Advance Studies
BGB	Border Guard Bangladesh
CCF	Chief Conservator of Forest
COP	Chief of Party
CREL	Climate Resilient Ecosystem and Livelihoods
DFO	Divisional Forest Officer
ETRT	Emergency Tiger Response Team
EU	European Union
FD	Forest Department
FTRT	Forest Tiger Response Team
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GPS	Global Positioning System
HTC	Human Tiger Conflict
ICT	Institutional Capacity Development and Training
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MoEF	Ministry of Environment & Forests
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PEC	Project Evaluation Committee
QPR	Quarterly Progress Report
SAC	Special Award Condition
SCBI	Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute
SEALS	Sundarbans Environment and Livelihood Support
SERC	Smithsonian Environment Research Center
SI	Smithsonian Institution
SMART	Spatial Monitoring and Research Tool
SOW	Scope of work
SRCWP	South Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
TPP	Technical Project Proforma
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VRT	Village Tiger Response Team
WCCU	Wildlife Crime Control Unit
WCS	World Conservation Society
WTS	Wildlife Technical Specialist
ZPO	Zoological Park Organization

## 1 Introduction

USAID's Bagh Activity contributes to protection of the tigers and conservation of the Sundarbans, with the overall goal of conserving biodiversity of Bangladesh. Bagh is a four year project implemented by WildTeam in partnership with the FD of the MoEF, USAID, Smithsonian Institution and the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies.

This is the second quarterly report for the second year of project implementation. The report highlights key accomplishments during the implementation period of April 1-June 30, 2015.

## 2 Quarter 2 Summary of Progress

### 2.1 Project management

The Bagh Activity senior management worked together to finalize the organizational chart, initiate and finalize most recruiting and hiring needs and conduct a program variance workshop with the component and cross-cutting leads to track project progress with the workplan. Some of the highlights are summarized below:

- WildTeam continues to work closely with UNOPS, SI and WildTeam UK to map out and finalize the foundational work (like SAC compliance, process mapping and financial management tools) to the organization that will provide clear, practical guidelines and policies for this growing organization.
- With support from UNOPS, WildTeam institutionalized the Process Improvement Coordination Committee (PICC). This committee aims at providing the clear direction and leadership required to support progress on the Special Award Conditions and discuss operational needs for WildTeam that UNOPS is providing.
- Bagh's DCOP continues to work closely with UNOPS and WildTeam head office to try and fill the operations structural gaps that remain in policies and procedures for HR, administration and finance issues.
- After the initial draft written by WT UK's STTA, WildTeam has completed its revision of its project management manual.. This manual is for WildTeam overall, with tools and strategies to help better support and manage its projects, current and future, including Bagh. This was a collaborative process between WildTeam, UNOPS and WT UK.
- Major progress was made in the TPP process, and the team learned that Mr. ZahirUddin, the West Sanctuary DFO, will most likely be named the Project Director.

### 2.2 Technical Activity Implementation in Quarter 2

Component-wise progress during the second quarter is summarized as below:

**Component 1 (Expanded knowledge base):** In quarter two, Component 1 activities have been detailed out and implementation has picked up momentum. To ensure the right staffing is in place to handle the upcoming research, WLC and technical support that will be provided to the other components, Component 1 performed the following activities:

- Staff assessment requirement of Component 1 for effective implementation of focused research activities. Following that, the organogram was revised and staff requisition

was requested to the WildTeam. Five research positions were advertised in May, and the interviews have been conducted in July; final interviews with WT CEO, Dr. Anwar Islam, are pending for the completion of the hiring process.

- Successfully hiring a GIS and Knowledge Management specialist, one of the key-positions for component 1. This position will help the GIS-related requirements for other activities in Component 1, and cross cutting research in other components of Bagh, apart from assisting the WTS in conducting habitat monitoring research.
- Component 1 conducted a needs assessment for GIS in June. The objective was to assess the current mapping and GIS capacity of Bagh team members, particularly M&E, ICT, gender, and those out in the field as they will be assisting with the field research, and plan upcoming trainings accordingly.

The Activities that have been initiated and/or accomplished in Quarter 2 are:

### **Link Research to Management Interventions**

- The draft documents for revision of Bangladesh Tiger Action Plan (BTAP) (namely 'Threat Assessment', 'Human-Tiger Conflict Mitigation Guidelines', 'Prioritization of Research Agenda') are prepared and currently being reviewed by the STTA from WildTeam UK. These documents will be shared with the working group and later will be submitted to FD for their endorsement early in quarter 3.
- To support Component 1 in the disease monitoring research, Dr. John C. M. Lewis, the Veterinary Director of the Wildlife Vets International (WVI), visited Bangladesh from 9th-16th June 2015, to discuss the study design and logistics for Tiger-Prey Disease Risk Assessment. He worked in consultation with the Wildlife Technical Specialist to discuss the scope, scale and complexity of disease surveillance activities, and sampling design, sampling and analytical protocols for the pilot study that is planned to be conducted during this year. Dr. John Lewis, along with Dr. Sandeep Sharma, Dr. Anwarul Islam, and Mr. Prakash Kant Silwal, also met with Prof. Dr. NitishDebnath, One Health Coordinator Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD), Bangladesh Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Dr. Ariful Islam, EcoHealth Alliance Bangladesh, Ms. Rubaiya Ahmed, Founder and Chairman of Obhoyaronno — Bangladesh Animal Welfare Society, and the key officials of the forest department and USAID to discuss the opportunities and scope of tiger disease surveillance research in Bangladesh.
- Research staff from Component 1 trained field staff on innovative data collection methods e.g. DNA sample collection from livestock killed by stray tigers, and resource mapping in Sundarbans using novel tracking devices.

### **Conduct Focused Research**

- To kick off this year's upcoming field research season, three concept notes for pilot research studies (prey monitoring, habitat monitoring, and DNA barcoding pilot study) have been prepared in consultation with the experts from Bagh research team, Smithsonian Institution, WildTeam Bangladesh, and WildTeam UK. The WTS received positive remarks from the Bagh Activity's named Project Director from the FD, Mr.



ZahirUddin, and we are awaiting approval for research permits based on our written request to the Forest Department.

- Component One's research team is also providing research support to Component 5 livelihood team by developing maps for identifying focused area for livelihood interventions as well as gearing up to start the resource collection mapping process (data review from the Forest Department, once we receive that data).
- The WTS was part of the Evaluation Committee, along with the DCOP, the livelihoods specialist and Smithsonian Institution's home office, in reviewing the RFQs for the international livelihoods expert, supported by Smithsonian. The work is estimated to start in August.
- Research experts from Component 1 are working with Component 3 in developing the Human-Tiger conflict prediction model.
- Bagh research team collaborated with the M&E team in developing their 'knowledge assessment' questionnaire, and consultation for online platform for M&E database.

### **Create structure for collaboration, learning and inspiration**

- A digital bibliography of 925 relevant research-related documents was prepared in an open-source bibliography management tool 'Zotero' to make it searchable by title, key-words, author's name, and category. We plan to transfer this library to an online live platform to disseminate this information to various stakeholders for easy access and search.
- Component 1 aims to develop the Tiger and Prey Poaching Monitoring Model. For this we had two consultation meetings with Component 2 regarding data sharing and usage, since Component 2 has been collecting and maintaining the database for poaching and trafficking related activities.
- Mr. SuprioChakma of the research team trained the anti-poaching patrolling team lead by FD and Component 2 in field-craft (identifying animals from Sundarbans) in May.
- Mr. Sam Leslie, a Master's student from Kent University UK, visited Bangladesh in May-June 2015, for Human-Tiger conflict research for his thesis. Component 1 supported him for field work and research discussion.

**Component 2 (Reduced illegal wildlife trafficking):** In Quarter 2, Component 2 focused on mobilizing patrolling initiatives under SMART patrolling, community patrolling and FTR regular operations; continuing law enforcement monitoring initiatives which includes wildlife crime monitoring, information collection, investigation, hotline operation and reporting; and capacity development of Forest Department staff.

### **TNA for LEA including FD and WCCU**

The Training Need Assessment (TNA) concept note has been customized, the methodology has been drafted, as well as the scope of work for hiring a Law Enforcement Specialist for conducting the TNA has been developed and signed off by USAID. The TNA consultant recruitment process is in progress and he is expected to begin August 1.

### **Consult FD and other stakeholders for developing a joint community patrolling mechanism including VTRTs, FTRTs and CMOs**



A series of consultation meetings have been conducted with Conservator of Forests (CF) Khulna, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) West, DFO Wildlife and CREL project representatives regarding Community Patrolling Group (CPG) formation and inclusion in Co-Management Committee (CMC). A draft concept of CPG in Satkhira has been presented in CMC's monthly meeting in 08 June 2015. All the members of Satkhira CMC agreed with the concept and they recommended for starting formation of CGP in Satkhira range.

### **Continue mobilizing FTRT patrolling as part of community patrolling strategy**

As the FTRT boat is under construction, the FTRT accomplished its regular patrolling on the ground. Training for boat driving to FTRT members has been completed, facilitating the FTRT members to the newly constructed boats. In order to mobilize FTRT with a more focused approach on community patrolling, community engagement, and emergency response, a three-month action plan has been drafted.

### **Interim patrol team formation, arrange logistics and provide ToT and regular training on patrolling for west sanctuary and Satkhira range**

Official approval has been received from FD to use their boats to conduct patrolling inside the forest so as to avoid (further) delay in implementation. Training on patrolling-associated skills to strengthen protection of Satkhira Range and West Sanctuary of Sundarbans Reserve Forest was conducted on 27 May - 28 May 2015 in Munshiganj, Satkhira range. CF Khulna inaugurated that training and all of the patrolling team members from FD and WildTeam/Bagh joined the training to improve their skill on first aid, tiger human conflict, species identification, crime scene management and other associated field skills.

Bagh's boat construction consultant has been recruited to provide technical guidance for boat construction monitoring as a professional Naval Architect. Three technical visits have been conducted and three reports have been generated. It is expected the consultant will provide consultations at least twice a month until the completion of the boat.

To mobilize the interim patrolling, two boat masters, two drivers, two cooks and two assistants have been recruited for a temporary basis and an induction to patrolling has been completed for them.

### **Mobilize interim patrolling in West Sanctuary and Satkhira range**

A series of coordination meetings with FD officials including CF Khulna and Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) West regarding mobilizing interim patrolling has been conducted. Bagh received the permission letter from the office of Chief Conservator of Forest (CCF) to mobilize patrolling in the Satkhira Range and West Sanctuary. A three months' patrolling plan was then produced to support patrolling field operations. Bagh then met with the DFO West and DFO Wildlife to discuss the SMART data model, which has been updated and customized for patrolling in Satkhira Range and West Sanctuary in order to manage data and produce reports. This data model will be used for SMART patrol data management and reporting purpose.

On 09 June 2015, Bagh Activity held a ribbon cutting inauguration ceremony at the Forest Station Office, Munshiganj, Satkhira Range, to officially launch the SMART Patrolling activity

in Satkhira range of the Sundarbans Reserved Forest (SRF). The CF for Khulna Division Dr. Sunil Kumar Kundu; Divisional Forest Officers (DFO) for Sundarbans West Division Mr. ZahirUddin Ahmed; Commander, 34 Battalion of Boarder Guard of Bangladesh (BGB) Lt-Col Md. Khaled bin Yusuf; Chief of Party of USAID's Bagh Activity Mr. Prakash Kant Silwal; Senior staff of Bagh and FD; and the members selected for the patrolling activity and few community members were present during the inauguration ceremony.

One patrol (10 days long) has been completed successfully in June 2015. Out of two teams, Team A started the first patrolling mission inside the forest from the operational base established in Burigoalini Range Office. The first patrol covered Puspakathi, Holdibunia, and Notabeki area of the West Sanctuary, and Dobeki and Kolagachia area of Satkhira range. Patrolling data have been inserted in SMART software and patrolling database has been updated with patrol data for June 2015. The Forest Department's response has been incredibly positive, and they've already requested adding two more patrols to the original schedule.

### **Wildlife crime information collection, investigation, wildlife crime report production and dissemination**

More than three information collection trips and field investigations have been conducted in between April and June where data have been analyzed and wildlife crime and criminal data databases have been updated on a monthly basis. The SMART intelligence platform has been generated for database management, and more than seven intelligence reports have been generated and disseminated to respective law enforcing agencies. A series of informant networking meetings have been conducted in Satkhira and Sarankhola range.

### **Agreement with agencies for wildlife crime information sharing**

Clearance from USAID was granted in Quarter 2 to work with a set list of Law Enforcement Agencies. Secured web based information sharing accounts have been formed for WildTeam staff in INTERPOL for safe information sharing. Individual agreements for collaboration with WCCU and other LEAs (BCG and ANSER BDP) will be done by end of quarter 3.

### **Tiger Hotline regular operations**

Hotline-borne data has been collected, collated and inserted into the hotline database on a regularly monthly basis. Analysis of hotline borne data has been completed for Quarter 2 and crime hotshot information has been sent to the patrol unit. To publicize Tiger Hotline around the Sundarbans, a sticker has been designed in Quarter 2. The Tiger Hotline continues to operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to receive calls and collect information by a group of well-trained officers on a rotational basis.

### **Develop wildlife crime Intel management strategy for WCCU**

A brainstorming session has been conducted to identify the scope, objectives and content of wildlife crime monitoring strategy for WildTeam. This strategy will guide to develop the strategy for WCCU and a content layout has been finalized for the wildlife crime monitoring strategy.

### **Cross site visit to Nepal/India**

A team of 8 FD staff and 7 Bagh activity staff has been selected for Nepal visit. Communication with Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation, Nepal has been established. The visit has been postponed till August 2015. See more details under ICT.

## **Component 3 (Minimized human-wildlife conflicts)**

### **VRTT on-going management (including VTRT refresher training)**

A total of 146 VTRT monthly meetings and 49 leader meetings were organized in all four ranges from April to June. The VTRT Annual Meeting 2015 was arranged in May in all ranges. A total of five meetings were arranged as refreshers to remind the VTRTs about the volunteerism concept, their roles and responsibilities, wildlife act and to update them about some recent issues.

### **Development of HTC management guidelines**

The draft documents for revision of Bangladesh Tiger Action Plan (BTAP); namely 'Human-Tiger Conflict Mitigation Guidelines', is prepared and currently being reviewed by the STTA from WildTeam UK. This document will be shared with the working group in the 3rd week of July for their comments and later will be submitted to FD for their endorsement. Bagh Research and Anti trafficking Action (ATA) teams worked together to update this guideline.

### **Consultation with CREL project to identify the scope of developing linkage between CMCs and VTRTs/FTRT**

Workshop and consultation sessions with CREL is ongoing. Two coordination meetings happened at the regional level in Quarter 2. Additionally, there were four CMC meetings in the four ranges where the annual development plan for CMC was discussed. Bagh range-level staff and respective Program Officers also joined those meetings.

### **HTC data collection and analysis**

HTC data is being collected on monthly basis by the range level staff. These data are analyzed, documented and a final report is shared with relevant stakeholders by email, with the intention of transitioning onto our online platform for ease of accessing the data.

### **Identify the need and scope of a conflict prediction model**

Bagh Research team is helping Community Conservation Action team to develop this prediction model.

### **Develop a conflict prediction model to strengthen HTC management**

HTC data of last 7 years has already been shared with DrSandeep Sharma (WTS) and Mr Abdullah Abu Diyan (GIS). It will be finished by December 2015 through the research team.

**Component 4 (Enhanced communications, outreach, and gender engagement):** Bagh aims to adopt a communications approach that targets local, national and international audiences by engaging, motivating and mobilizing key stakeholders, private sector partners, media outlets and local communities that depend on the Sundarbans ecosystem for their livelihoods.

At the local level, Bagh will continue and build upon WildTeam's ongoing "Mother-like Sundarbans" campaign to inspire the involvement of the local communities to engage themselves collectively and individually in understanding how their actions partly define the Sundarbans current status. Behavioral change through improved communications strategies, outreach and gender engagement will be targeted throughout this campaign for addressing human threats to wildlife including tigers and the Sundarbans as their habitat. Additionally, at the local level, Bagh will build on the learning and successes of the VTRT behavioral change initiative to tackle deer poaching and consumption behaviors.

## **Component 5 (Improved livelihoods for conservation)**

### **Assess current AIG Activities and create a Bagh Livelihoods Plan**

A desktop review was completed, including an analysis of five projects: CREL, SEALS, SDBC, SBCP (past) and RI's supported promotion of cultural ecotourism. In addition, Integrated Resource Management Plan (IRMP) and Bangladesh Tiger Action Plan BTAP) were also reviewed, and the livelihoods team met multiple times with the CREL team, FD in Khulna and reviewed information with the DCOP and Wildlife Technical Specialist.

Orientation on livelihoods was conducted (held on 7-10 June) at Ava center, Khulna. First session at 9<sup>th</sup> June covered definition of livelihoods, sustainable livelihoods process and sustainable livelihoods framework; the second session requested the participation of the Bagh range staff and Khulna regional office to identify potential livelihoods option and review the list of viable value chains the livelihoods team presented in the desktop study based on their findings. Additionally, the team discussed Bagh's draft of the beneficiaries list, which includes tiger widows, VTRTs, natural resource collectors and possibly poachers themselves. The team will take this information and finalize the Livelihoods Approach for the project with the international livelihoods expert they recruited through Smithsonian Institution at the end of May, after receiving approval for the international travel.

The livelihoods team revised their work plan, based on the AWP Y2, and included additional steps to the already-approved activities. The team received approval from the senior management team to conduct four Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) based on meetings with the DCOP, conservation manager and the Wildlife Technical Specialist. These are to be held in July/August, with one or two conducted during the visit of the International Livelihoods expert's trip to the field. The purpose of the FGDs is to find out potential livelihoods options for Bagh livelihoods planning, based on local opinion. The livelihoods team created, reviewed, finalized and produced the questionnaire based on the aforementioned meetings with the senior management team members, as well as receiving feedback from BCAS's social scientist expert.

### **Innovative AIG ideas and approaches through Bagh**

Originally scheduled to release an Annual Program Statement or Request for Concept Notes for innovative ideas on AIG in the Sundarbans periphery during National Tiger Festival's original dates (July 29-August 1), Component 5 will await the international livelihoods expert to finalize the concept and determine the best strategy to move forward with this approach.



Additionally, The team drafted a revision of the remaining Y2 BaghLivelihoods& Activity Plan and submitted to BCAS for necessary action (for a breakdown of budget projections for more realistic financial management needs).

## 2.3 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

- Bagh M&E Plan went through rigorous review process by all component leads, DCOP, COP, WildTeam UK, ACME & USAID. A plentitude of comments and suggestions were received and incorporated for the improvement of the plan. Finally, the Bagh M&E Plan received approval from USAID on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2015. A many thanks to all that supported the process!
- While awaiting approval, all of the tools for the Bagh M&E indicators were drafted (both Bangla and English) as well as the tools for training-related indicators with consensus of ICT and provided to field through ICT for field implementation. The remaining tools werealso drafted and shared with detailed guidelines to the field for implementation in May.
- Two programs have been organized by M&E team on approved Bagh M&E plan:
  - **A consensus building workshop on Bagh M&E Plan** conducted at Dhaka to share the plan with all senior staff of Bagh, ACME & USAID. This was to increase knowledge and understanding of the M&E process for the project, and finalize the target for most indicators.
  - **Khulna training program:**this training focused on sharing the Bagh M&E plan, data collection tools, data quality assessment & data storage. This is the first time that all indicators including the Results Framework and training materials translated into Bangla and provided training in Bangla for a better understanding to the field staff who are main implementers and reporters.
- Development of Bagh online database has also initiated during this period. The team visited CREL to observe CREL Link (CREL M&E database) as well as a “capacity assessment discussion” was conducted with two database development vendors to analyze what Bagh’s real needs were, and what could be viable options to include in the database. Bagh’s DCOP, WTS, M&E specialist (and team), BCAS and CREL team members were present in that discussion. Based on it, an RFP for the database development was published; the Evaluation Committee comprised of Bagh and BCAS team members is anticipated to convene in the early days of August.
- Individual increased knowledge and improved attitude baseline survey will be conducted for Bagh indicator 4 & 5 through a third party. The M&E team drafted the RFP for the survey in Quarter 2 with the support of BCAS. Another baseline survey will be held to get the status of conservation of wildlife and Sundarbans and its effect/impact on socio-economic and environment and the RFP has been drafted & forwarded to BCAS for onward action.
- Component-wise Bagh intervention area maps of Sundarbans have been prepared with the support from research team to guide in mapping interventions throughout the progress of the project.
- The team has participated in trainings on Online ArcGIS portal and a workshop on Individual project learning and sharing session organized by USAID. ACME also organized a program on M&E Training & CB Needs Self-Assessment Findings of IPs

and Proposed 2015 Training Schedule for IPOs to demonstrate DQA, Quarterly progress report, PMP overview of USAID, Mid Term Evaluations, and Capacity Building Events.


- The team drafted a revision of the remaining Y2 Bagh M&E Budget & Activity Plan and submitted to BCAS for necessary action (for a breakdown of budget projections for more realistic financial management needs).

## 2.4 Gender

- Bagh Gender Approach has been prepared, approved and already in place after completion of recently Comprehensive Training in Khulna 2015. The purpose of this activity was to mainstream gender in all project activities, and create a clear vision as to what the objectives are of the Bagh Gender Approach. Beneficiaries of this activity included both internal staff of Bagh Activity and ultimate beneficiaries in order to ensure sustainable and effective natural resource management and conservation activities under Bagh.
- Based on the Bagh Gender Approach, the gender specialist reached out to the component leads, cross-cutting leads and the team as a whole to initiate the formation of the Bagh Gender Working Committee (GWC). The first GWC was held in Khulna accompanied by component leads, project officers, M&E, ICT, livelihood team members and facilitated by the gender specialist. A sixteen-member working committee team has been formed to regularly monitor, guide and document information pertaining to project-specific gender issues. Gender committee will subsequently convene meetings every quarter.
- A concept note has been prepared to conduct a Gender Survey in the Sunderbans that will determine gender baseline information in support of capturing gender data related to Bagh's M&E indicators. With the support of BCAS, a survey team leader has been hired in Quarter 2 to lead the survey once the questionnaire is finalized (August 2015) and reviewed by USAID's gender specialists through the Bagh AOR. Participants of this survey include FTRT, VTRT, BaghBondhu, and Tiger Widows.
- The gender specialist submitted her final draft of an organizational-level gender policy for WildTeam Human Resources coordinator to review, revise and finalize for the benefit of WildTeam, and thus, Bagh. The objective was to focus gender roles, responsibilities and strengthening the organizational culture. The guidelines will assist WildTeam in integrating gender equity goals and objectives into all its programs, interventions, service and training activities so that organization become internally and institutionally accepted.
- A sexual harassment policy was also written and submitted in May 2015 to WildTeam's head office for review. The objective of the policy was to ensure healthy working environment for every worker, regardless of sexual orientation.
- The gender specialist trained all Bagh field staff on the Bagh Gender Approach, the objectives of the Gender Working Committee and how it will influence their day-to-day work, and overall guidance on the draft gender policy for WildTeam, including gender-mainstreaming guidelines. It was a full-one-day training session in order to educate staff on various gender perspectives and to "see" their work through the gender lens.
- Gender Specialist also supported the M&E team in developing their 'knowledge assessment' questionnaire for M&E database.



## 2.5 Institutional Capacity Development and Training (ICT)

- The most significant event that was held during the Q3Y2 was a four-day training organized by the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) together with the USAID's Bengal Tiger Conservation Activity (Bagh Activity) commenced on 7 June 2015 at CSS Ava Center, Khulna. All staff from Khulna, four (4) Range offices, Patrolling team and Dhaka team had been requested to attend the program. The objective was how to capture information pertaining to Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E), Gender, Livelihood, Communications, Research and Institutional Capacity Development & Training (ICT). 
- The Consensus Building Workshop on Bagh M&E Plan was organized by USAID's Bagh Activity in collaboration with BCAS on 26th April 2015 at Rigs Inn, Dhaka. The senior management team, M&E team and component leads of the Bagh Activity and participants from USAID, BCAS and ACME had joined the workshop with the objective to share the final draft Bagh M&E Plan for common and consensus understanding, finalize the target of Bagh M&E Plan indicators and discuss on data collection tools.
- A three-day classroom training was held on 25-27 April 2015 in Munshiganj followed by an interim patrolling (on-the-job training for the first team) using SMART patrolling method that has been completed in the 2nd half of June 2015. Another two-day classroom training was later held on 4th and 5th June 2015. A total of 28 BFD staff attended the training. The second team had already left for patrolling recently in late June 2015. Although the interim patrolling is a core activity of Component 2, it is considered on-the-job training as it helps enhance the patrolling capacity of BFD staff using SMART technology in the Sundarbans. The training covered sessions like basic first aid, THC (Tiger Human Conflict) guideline, Community engagement & Civil affairs, Database training for team leaders, Emergency rescue, Prosecution, Species identification, Patrolling layout etc.
- The Capacity Development Coordinator assisted Component 2 with writing up the strategic concept note and scope of work for the Training Needs Assessment STTA (see Component 2 for details). Once the Short-term Technical Advisor (STTA) joins the ICT team, s/he will collaborate with the ICT team, Component 2, Senior Management Team of Bagh, and WCCU of BFD to conduct the TNA.
- An Exposure Visit Activity was scheduled to take place in Chitwan National Park, Nepal between 7th and 14 May 2015. It was expected that participants would be able to correlate their learning and how that could be applied in the USAID's Bagh Activity. In addition, it is expected to enhance the knowledge of GOB officials in the area of SMART Patrolling, Government regulatory framework, community engagement, multi-agency coordination and be able to contribute to developing better management plan for Sunderbans focusing on anti-trafficking. However, due to earthquake in Nepal, the activity was postponed and is now expected to be held in Q3.

### **3 Variance Report**

## Appendix A

### ***Success story: SMART patrolling in action***

On 09 June 2015, Bagh Activity held a ribbon cutting inauguration ceremony at the Forest Station Office, Munshiganj, Satkhira Range, to officially launch the SMART Patrolling activity in Satkhira range of the Sundarbans Reserved Forest (SRF). The Conservator of Forest (CF) for Khulna Circle Dr. Sunil Kumar Kundu; Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Sundarbans West Division Mr. ZahirUddin Ahmed; Commander, 34 Battalion of Boarder Guard of Bangladesh (BGB) Lt-Col Md. Khaled bin Yusuf; Chief of Party of USAID's Bagh Activity Mr. Prakash Kant Silwal; Senior staff of Bagh and FD; and the members selected for the patrolling activity and community members were present during the inauguration ceremony. This is the first time for Bangladesh to launch SMART patrolling in such a challenging tiger conservation landscape like Sundarbans.

During the inauguration, Dr. Kundu thanked WildTeam and Bagh for introducing SMART Techniques to the Bangladesh Sundarbans to help protect the wildlife and biodiversity in the region. Mr. Zahir was positive that hopefully SMART Patrolling will be replicated in other ranges of the Sundarbans. Lt-Col. Khaled bin Yusuf showed his commitment to support the patrol teams and FD in any emergency situation. He also advised the project to work at the HQ level in Dhaka as well to make it more official and sustainable. In the concluding remarks, Bagh COP Mr. Silwal thanked the FD, Panthera, local law enforcement agencies and WildTeam for their immense support and cooperation for a successful roll-out of SMART Patrolling in the Sundarbans. He appreciated the funding support received from USAID and informed that after 10 months of efforts, USAID Bagh Activity was finally able to roll-out the patrolling activity using the SMART techniques and therefore this should be considered as a very successful event by the FD, WildTeam, Panthera and USAID. He also explained briefly how a team of Bagh Component 2 and FD staff under the leadership of DFO- West initiated the SMART patrolling activity in August 2014. First, the team deliberated and finalized the interim patrolling strategy and secondly, identified a team of 20 front-line FD staff to whom they provided a two-week SMART Patrolling training in March 2015 with support from Panthera. The training was inaugurated by the Chief Conservator of Forest (CCF) Mr. Md. Yunus Ali who further encouraged the Bagh team to roll-out full time patrolling throughout the Sundarbans as soonest. After the training, with active support from the CF Khulna Dr. Kundu; DFO- West Mr. Zahir; CF Mr. RezaulSikdar (Administration) and ACCF Mr. Tariqul Islam, (Development & Planing) and other FD staff, Bagh was able to outline the detail strategy and prepare the roll-out plan for the SMART Patrolling for the next three months. In these time frame, Bagh will test out the current patrolling strategy and iron out any contingency plans required for a full time patrolling activity.

There was nearly a three months gap between the initial SMART training and the actual roll-out. Therefore, right before the inauguration on 31 May 2015, a two day refresher training on SMART patrolling was provided to the patrolling team by the trainers from USIAD's Bagh Activities.

After the efficacious inauguration, SMART patrolling has begun in Satkhira range and West Sanctuary to enhance the protection level in that area. Two teams named Team Alpha (A) and Team Bravo (B) have been formed with motivated Forest Department's staffs and a group of trainers from patrolling unit of Anti Trafficking Actions (ATA) workstream of USAID Bagh Activity. Team A (chief trainer Capt. (retd.) Kausher, assistant trainer AlamHawladar; team leader: Wildlife Ranger Md. HelimRayhan) started the first patrolling mission inside the forest from the operational base established in Burigoalini Range Office. The field base for Team A was Notabeki and they covered most of the West Sanctuary. After successful completion of 10 days patrol Team A returned in operational base.



Figure 1. Inauguration of the SMART patrolling in the Sundarbans





Figure 2. Patrol team Alpha is doing water patrolling in West Sanctuary

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